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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/054,628	01/22/2002	Thomas James Klofta	7571RD	7063

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EXAMINER

STEPHENS, JACQUELINE F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3761

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/054,628

Applicant(s)

KLOFTA ET AL.

Examiner

Jacqueline F. Stephens

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 September 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 9/18/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
2. Applicant argues that Gale teaches a rheological agent to a drug that may be controllably released over time, while Roe's lotion is not time release; and Gale's and Roe's delivery systems are completely different. Applicant further argues Gale teaches away from Roe's claimed invention in that Roe teaches a semi-solid composition and Gale teaches a fluid composition. The test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981). The examiner has relied on Gale for a teaching of a rheological agent as an art-recognized equivalent to the claimed rheological agents. The fact that Gale recognizes another advantage (controlled time release) from the rheological agent does not patentably distinguish the claimed materials over the prior art.
3. In response to applicant's argument that Gale is nonanalogous art, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention.

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See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Roe teaches a rheological agent in a lotion composition generally affects the ability of the composition to flow or be deformed. A stabilizer also affects the deformation of the composition. Roe discloses cellulose derivatives as a rheological agent as broadly as claimed. Gale also teaches a rheological agent for thickening purposes to reduce the ability of the fluid to flow (col. 5, lines 45-50). Thus, Roe and Gale teach rheological agents to solve the same problem.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to

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consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1-11 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roe USPN 5609587 in view of Gale USPN 4661105.

As to claims 1 and 5-11, Roe discloses the present invention substantially as claimed. However, Roe does not disclose the exact amount of a rheological agent present in the lotion composition. Roe teaches the lotion composition can have optional components, such as a stabilizer (col. 23, lines 35-36). Roe teaches the cellulose derivatives are used as a stabilizer. A rheological agent in a lotion composition generally affects the ability of the composition to flow or be deformed. A stabilizer also affects the deformation of the composition. Therefore, Roe discloses cellulose derivatives as a rheological agent as broadly as claimed.

Roe recognizes the amount of the components can be varied and this will affect the viscosity of the lotion composition (col. 10, lines 38-42). Roe, therefore recognizes the stability of the composition is a result effective variable of percentage of components used, including the percentage of the rheological agent. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the article of Roe with the claimed amount of rheological agent, since discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art.

Roe does not disclose the claimed rheological agents. Roe teaches a cellulose derivative. Gale USPN 4661105 shows that cellulosic agents are equivalent to the claimed materials as rheological agents (Gale col. 5, line 61 through col. 6, line 19).

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Therefore, because these two materials were art-recognized equivalents at the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to substitute cellulosic agents for the claimed rheological agents.

The absorbent article comprises:

- a) a vapor permeable backsheet (col. 6, lines 2-3);
- b) a liquid pervious topsheet **520** positioned in facing relation with the backsheet **530**;
- c) an absorbent core **540** located between said backsheet and said topsheet (Roe col. 5, line 66 through col. 6, line 1);
- and d) a skin care composition on at least a portion of a wearer-contacting surface of the absorbent article (Roe Abstract and col. 10, lines 25-31), which comprises from about 10 to about 95 weight percent of an emollient (Roe col. 17, lines 61-64) and from about 5 to about 90 weight percent of a wax (Roe col. 21, lines 35-38). Roe discloses the use of other components, such as stabilizers and viscosity modifiers (col. 23, lines 27-44). However, Roe does not specifically disclose the use of the claimed rheological agents.

As to claim 2, Roe/Gale discloses the emollient is selected from the claimed group of materials (Roe col. 15, line 47 through col. 16, line 24).

As to claim 3, Roe/Gale discloses the emollient is a petroleum-based emollient selected from the group consisting of petrolatum, mineral oil, and mixtures thereof (Roe col. 16, lines 6-33).

As to claim 4, Roe/Gale discloses the wax is selected from the group consisting of the claimed materials (Roe col. 21, lines 20-24).

Conclusion


4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacqueline F. Stephens whose telephone number is (571) 272-4937. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Jacqueline F Stephens
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3761

November 27, 2006